

Politics

Convoy protest received hundreds of donations that appeared to be from abroad

The most common source for foreign donations was the United States

[Elizabeth Thompson](#) · CBC News · Posted: Feb 10, 2022 4:00 AM ET | Last Updated: February 10



Trucks and protesters mass in downtown Ottawa during an ongoing protest against vaccine mandates on Feb. 4, 2022. (Michael Charles Cole/CBC)

Hundreds of the GoFundMe donations to the Ottawa convoy protest came from donors who said they were located outside of Canada, according to an analysis of data collected by CBC News.

The analysis of a sample of more than 6,600 comments made on the GoFundMe crowdfunding page before it was shut down shows that 573 donations amounting to more than \$33,378 came from people who said they were located abroad.

The donations identified by CBC News are likely only a fraction of all of the donations made by people outside of Canada. Many of the people who made the 120,000 donations to the campaign didn't leave comments — and at least one-third of them chose to make their donations anonymously or under fictitious names.

- [**Ontario court freezes access to funds raised for protest convoy on GiveSendGo platform**](#)
- [**Convoy protest could change the way money is monitored, says watchdog agency**](#)

Some domestic donors may have chosen to cite a foreign location when they donated. In the comments collected by CBC News, 29 said that they were Canadians living abroad.

Neither GoFundMe nor GiveSendGo — another crowdfunding platform that has helped the protesters raise money — has responded yet to questions from CBC News about how many donors were located abroad.

In the sample of comments collected by CBC News, more than half of the 573 donations made by people reporting they were outside Canada — 322 — came from individuals who said they were located in the United States. Collectively, American donors contributed \$21,101, or 63.2 per cent, of the money donated by people who said they were located outside of Canada.

After the U.S., the location cited most often by donors was the United Kingdom, where 53 people donated a total of \$2,519.

Two dozen donors who gave a total of \$635 listed their location as France, while Germany was listed as the source for 18 donations totalling \$2,005. Australia was listed 18 times for a total of \$1,154, while New Zealand was cited in five donations totalling \$195.





Protesters hold placards as they support a convoy protesting pandemic measures in Wellington, New Zealand. (Mark Mitchell/New Zealand Herald/The Associated Press)

Some of those countries, such as New Zealand, are now seeing attempts to emulate the Canadian convoy, which was set up to protest vaccine mandates and pandemic public health restrictions.

Some six-figure donations to the GoFundMe campaign were made anonymously. Many of those who said they were donating from abroad gave smaller donations.

Amounts ranged from a low of \$5 to a \$1,500 donation, which came from someone who listed their location in the United States and said: "Canadian truckers are an inspiration to the U.S." Another \$1,030 came from a donor who said they were in the U.K. and offered the comment: "With admiration ... May God Bless you."

- [**Anti-vaccine mandate protests spread across the country, crippling Canada-U.S. trade**](#)

- ## Ottawa convoy protest dig in

In recent days, questions have emerged about how the protesters raised so much money so quickly and where it came from. Before GoFundMe shut down the protest convoy's crowdfunding page and announced that donors would be refunded, it had attracted more than 120,000 donations amounting to more than \$10 million.

No refunds

Protest organizers quickly moved their crowdfunding to the Christian fundraising site GiveSendGo, where their campaign has received more than 85,000 donations totalling more than \$7.7 million US since Friday.

Unlike GoFundMe, the GiveSendGo site says it does not refund donations because the money flows directly to the bank account designated by organizers of a fundraising campaign.

A separate Adopt a Trucker campaign to support the protest has received more than 7,000 donations totalling more than \$644,000.

Speaking to reporters Wednesday, Public Safety Minister Marco Mendicino said he is concerned about the number of contributions to the truck convoy protest and their "sheer size."





A woman walks past protest signs placed on a fence surrounding Parliament Hill on Tuesday in Ottawa. (Adrian Wyld/The Canadian Press)

"It's a very timely and urgent issue that does require thought and attention and perhaps some additional action on the part of all of us to be sure we can't see any kind of contributions come in to undermine our public safety or national security," said Mendicino.

- **In 13th day of protest, police warn of arrests, charges for those blocking streets**

The House of Commons committee on public safety and national security will begin hearings Thursday on the role crowdfunding platforms have played in funding the protest, which has paralyzed the downtown core of the nation's capital for days.

Officials from Canada's money laundering and terrorist financing watchdog, the Financial Transactions and Reports Analysis Centre of Canada (FINTRAC), are scheduled to testify. The committee voted last week to also call officials from GoFundMe to testify.

'Ideologically Motivated Violent Extremism'

Liberal MP Taleeb Noormohamed gave notice Tuesday of a motion to expand the scope of the committee's study to include the rise of "Ideologically Motivated Violent Extremism" (IMVE) in Canada, including "the influence of foreign and domestic actors in funding and supporting violent extremist ideologies in Canada" and "the use of social media to fuel the IMVE movement."

The motion calls on the committee to examine the role of anonymous and foreign donations and to call GiveSendGo, Paypal and Stripe to testify along with GoFundMe.

WATCH / Some Ottawa protesters digging in, despite threat of charges:



<https://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/convoy-protest-vaccine-ottawa-1.6345889>

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Threat of criminal charges, vehicle seizures won't dissuade Ottawa protesters

8 months ago | 2:12

The protesters in Ottawa are being warned about the possibility of criminal charges, arrests and vehicle seizures from police, but instead of packing up, some are digging in.

In a statement earlier this week, GiveSendGo co-founder Heather Wilson said the truck convoy protest triggered an "outpouring of support from across the globe."

That is reflected in the comments collected by CBC News from GoFundMe's page.

One donor from Scotland left a comment but no donation.

'Stay strong, Godspeed'

"I have 24 eggs in the fridge and enough dog food to last me till the end of the month. Sorry I can't spare any more, currently unemployed due to mandates. This IS the changing point and important. Stay strong, Godspeed ..."

One donor, who described themselves as American, donated \$100.

"Miss vacationing in your fine country! Keep the heat on that little tyrant! Minnesota patriot."

The truck convoy protest appears to have also resonated in the Netherlands.

"Thanks for liberating us 77 years ago," said one person who donated \$10. "Now go and liberate Canada!!!!"

- [Toronto police close Queen's Park Circle in response to possible convoy protest](#)

Several donors who listed their location as the U.S. said they hope to see similar protests in the States.

"THANK YOU from the USA (Arizona)" wrote one who donated \$100. "Our governments have poked the bear in a BIG way. I wish I could be there to cheer you on. Hoping we will have our own FREEDOM CONVOY here in the USA soon!!

Some donors who said they were in the U.K. compared the convoy to the fight in their own country.

"Freedom matters and is worth fighting for," said a \$20 donor. "Well done truckers and all out on the streets supporting the cause, you're an inspiration to us in the U.K. fighting the NHS vaccine mandate."

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With files from Roberto Rocha

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